

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

GROWTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITIES CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Growth Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 16 September 2014.

PRESENT: Mr M A Wickham (Chairman), Mr S Holden (Vice-Chairman), Mr M Baldock, Mr M A C Balfour, Mr A H T Bowles, Miss S J Carey, Mr B E Clark, Mr G Lymer, Mr F McKenna, Mrs E D Rowbotham, Mrs P A V Stockell (Substitute for Mr C Simkins) and Mr R Truelove

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M C Dance, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr J Bunnett and Ms A McNulty, Chief Executive, Education Business Partnership, Kent

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms B Cooper (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Mrs T Bruton (Head of Regeneration Projects), Mr R Gill (Economic Policy and Strategy Manager), Mr R Fitzgerald (Performance Manager), Mr M Scrivener (Corporate Risk Manager), Ms A Agyepong (Equalities and Diversity Manager) and Ms C A Singh (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

28. Apologies and Substitutes
(Item A2)

Apologies were received from Mr Simkins. Mrs P Stockell attended as substitute for Mr Simkins.

29. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda
(Item A3)

1. Mr Balfour made a declaration regarding Item C4 as he is a Trustee of Alms Houses in the area.
2. Mr Wickham made a declaration regarding Item B1 advising that he was formally on the Leader Panel.
3. Mr Baldock advised that he had an employment role with the European Parliament.

30. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2014
(Item A4)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2014 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

31. Verbal updates

(Item A5)

(Verbal Updates by Mr M Dance, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Mr M Hill, Cabinet Member for Community Services)

1. The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Mr Dance, gave his verbal update advising on the following:
 - TIGER and ESCALATE had improved their RAG rating and £17.3 million funds being awarded to the schemes had been confirmed. Progress was being made to acquire a share of £10 million of unallocated funds.
 - The option of the Estuary Airport has been withdrawn as an option by the Davis Commission
 - Discussions continued to be held with Paramount Park owners on the prospective volume of visitors and the infrastructure and public transport required to accommodate them and the finance to achieve this.
2. The Cabinet Member for Community Services, Mr Hill, gave his verbal update advising that an event in the format of the “X Factor” was held in Tunbridge Wells on 7 September. Eighty acts applied from which eighteen acts were selected to take part. Those acts included dance groups, bands and a group of nursery children. The 4 judges awarded prizes of £1000 and £500 to the winners. Mr Hill had been impressed with the organisation of the event which attracted 800 people to attend.
3. Mr Hill responded to a comment advising that he would look into whether filmed footage of the event was available to be put online.
4. RESOLVED that the information in the verbal updates be noted and that Mr Hill look into whether filmed footage of the event is available to be put online.

32. PRESENTATIONS:

(Item A6)

Mr John Bunnett, Chief Executive, Ashford Borough Council

1. The Chief Executive, Ashford Borough Council, Mr Bunnett, gave a presentation using overheads entitled the “Ashford/Kent Delivery Deal - The Big 8 – The Proposition”. This outlined how Ashford Borough Council was working with Kent County Council to maximise the regeneration output through pooling investment and responsibilities to create jobs, homes and maximising Ashford’s potential.
2. Mr Bunnett responded to questions by Members which included the following:
 - Part of the measures Ashford Borough Council was undertaking to secure businesses into the area included piloting free parking in the town centre, redeveloping the dilapidated parts of town centre; ensuring flowerbeds were planted and repairs carried out.
 - Ashford Borough Council was ensuring that the existing residents of Ashford were not disadvantaged by the new development by putting in facilities that were priorities to local residence, as a result of carrying out local surveys, such as good links with jobs, housing, a good recycling policy and a good range of leisure facilities.

Ms Ann McNulty, Chief Executive

3. The Chief Executive of Education Business Partnership Kent, (EBP Kent), Ms Ann McNulty, gave a presentation on the functions of EBP Kent. She explained that EBP Kent was a charitable organisation that had been in existence for 25 years. EBP Kent was active with eleven thousand companies. EBP Kent's main aim was to fuse schools and employers together to encourage opportunities for work experience in business; and literacy projects.

4. Ms McNulty responded to questions by Members as follows:

- Young People need to be able to move on where they want to therefore it was critical for adults to act impartially when giving advice. The information they received from EBP Kent would give them a pathway to achieve their goals.
- A comment was made that the EBP Kent was of great value to Kent young people.
- Ms McNulty advised that EBP welcomed strategic support from the local authority. Ms McNulty sought support with finding venues to hold events and volunteers to talk to pupils about their "pathways".

5. RESOLVED that the Cabinet Committee thanked Mr Bunnett and Ms McNulty for attending the meeting and giving informative presentations.

33. Support for Kent Downs and East Kent LEADER Programmes 2015- 2020

(Item B1)

(Report by Mr M Austerberry, Corporate Director for Growth Environment and Transport)

(Mrs T Bruton, Head of Regeneration Projects, was present for this item)

1. The Head of Regeneration Projects, Mrs Bruton, introduced a report that gave a background to the activity undertaken to develop a Kent Downs and Marshes LEADER Programme bid for funding from the Rural Development Programme for England 2014-2020. The report also dealt with the opportunity that had arisen to create a new LEADER area in East Kent as part of the process which will enable more of the rural parts of the county to benefit from the opportunities provided by external funding.

2. Mr Holden commented that he welcomed the East Kent Programme and the opportunity to cover as much of the existing "white space" as possible. Mrs Bruton advised that if all Kent LEADER bids were successful a wider area would be covered leaving a much smaller percentage excluded due to the density and population barrier which was capped at 150,000.

3. RESOLVED that the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member, Economic Development for KCC to remain the accountable body for Kent Downs and Marshes Leader for the new Programme period ending in 2020 and also takes on this function for East Kent Leader. This would enable both Leader groups to have one administrative team looking after both and a

sharing of back office functions, resulting in efficiencies and reduced staff costs.

34. Planned consultation on the structural options to deliver Kent County Council's Libraries, Registration and Archive Services
(Item C1)

(Report by Mr M Hill, Cabinet Member for Community Services and Mr M Austerberry, Corporate Director, Growth Environment and Transport Directorate)

(Ms C White, Review Team Manager, Mr J Burr, Principal Director of Transformation and Mr James Pearson, Service Improvement Manager were present for this item)

1. The Cabinet Member for Community Services, Mr Hill, introduced a report that summaries the steps taken so far in the review of Libraries, Registration and Archives as part of phase one of the Facing the Challenge Transformation Programme. The report also outlined the plans to consult with the public, staff, unions and elected Members and other stakeholders about all the option including the preferred option of a Charitable Trust which had been endorsed by the County Council on 15 May 2014.

2. Mr Hill and officers present noted comments and responded to questions by Members which included the following:

- Mr Hill stated that he wanted to protect small libraries but had concerns that they were under used and efficient ways in delivering the library service needed to be found.
- Members would continue to have involvement in the decisions to be made regarding the future of the Library Service.
- There had already been work carried out to look at digitising the Registration Services as genealogy was identified as a key market and forming partnerships with other Archives would enhance the experience. If the option for a Charitable Trust was the preferred option further income streams to be looked into.
- The specification for employees would be laid down by the Charitable Trust on which Members would be represented as Trustees.

3. The Chairman agreed to a request for a vote on the recommendation. The vote was as follows:

5 for, 3 against and 1 abstention
Carried

4. RESOLVED that the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee agreed to the proposal to complete further stakeholder engagement and subsequent to this, initiate consultation on the options for the future delivery of Libraries, Registration and Archive services including the preferred option to establish a charitable trust.

35. Kent and Medway Growth Strategy

(Item C2)

(Report by Mr M Dance, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Mr M Austerberry, Interim Corporate Director for Growth Environment and Transport)

(Mr R Gill, Economic Strategy and Policy Manager, was present for this item)

1. The Economic Strategy and Policy Manager, Mr Gill, introduced the report that explained the process through which it was proposed that the Kent and Medway Growth Strategy would be revised and finalised following recent funding decisions and the wider policy landscape. He advised that the revised strategy would be submitted to the 2 December meeting of this Cabinet Committee. The final draft Strategy would then be submitted to the Kent and Medway Group and adoption of the strategy by the KMEP and the Cabinet would be in March 2015.

2. Mr Gill responded to comments and questions by Members as follows:-

- A comment was made that education, in particular further education, should be included in the Strategy. It was advised that Locate in Kent was looking at setting up a science sector group to look at innovation in science.
- Mr Baldock advised that he could not endorse the report. He considered that the growth referred to catered for people coming from outside of the area. He considered that the government should be looking at what it was doing to Kent.
- A request was made for land based industries to be considered.

3. Mr Baldock requested his decision not to support the recommendations be noted.

4. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted; and
- b) the report be noted and a further draft of the revised Kent and Medway Growth Strategy be submitted to the 2 December meeting of this Cabinet Committee.

36. Local Growth Fund: Outcomes for Kent

(Item C3)

(Report by Mr M Dance, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Mr M Austerberry, Interim Corporate Director for Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee)

(Mr R Gill, Economic Strategy and Policy Manager was present for this item)

1. The Economic Strategy and Policy Manager, Mr Gill, introduced the report that sets out the allocation of the Local Growth Fund in the form of a single 'Growth Deal' with each LEP. The South East LEP had been allocated £442.1 million, of which £272.3 million was committed and a further £164.4 million that was provisionally allocated to projects that would start in 2016/17 or later.

2. Mr Gill responded to comments and questions by Members as follows:
 - Comments were made by Members that the focus on the skills agenda was vital as there were skill gaps. The workforce needed to be equipped with the necessary skills.
 - A comment was made on the delivery of the Bean and Ebbsfleet junction project on the A2 that the capital needed to be secured and a skilled workforce needed to be ready.
 - It was advised that only projects given tangible funding were those in 2016/17 any other projects were on a provisional list.
3. RESOLVED that the responses to questions by Members and the report be noted.

37. Ebbsfleet Garden City UDC

(Item C4)

(Report by Mr M Dance, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Mr M Austerberry, Interim Corporate Director for Growth Environment and Transport)

(Mr N Smith, Head of Development, was present for this item)

1. The Head of Development, Mr Smith, introduced a report providing an update on the progress of the Ebbsfleet Garden City and UDC advising that Mr Cassidy had been appointed as Chairman designate of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation and the consultation launched by the government in August was due to end on 6 October. The report would also be considered at the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee meeting held on 17 September 2014.
2. Mr Smith responded to questions by Members as follows:
 - Mr Smith responded to concerns about the consultation process advising that the public consultation was not about the mix of development it was about process and was a golden opportunity to flag up issues.
 - Mr Smith agreed to forward to details of the Member briefing proposed for 9 October.
3. RESOLVED that the responses to questions by Members and the progress to date and the immediate next steps outlined in the report be noted.

38. Risk Management - Strategic Risks

(Item D1)

(Report by Mr M Dance, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Mr M Hill, Cabinet Member for Community Services and Mr M Austerberry, Interim Corporate Director for Growth Environment and Transport)

(Mr M Scrivener, Corporate Risk Manager, was present for this item)

1. The Corporate Risk Manager, Mr Scrivener, introduced a report that gave an overview of the strategic risks of relevance to the portfolio of the Growth Economic

Development Cabinet Committee advising that the targets set needed to be realistic and what was being done to mitigate risk.

2. In response to a comment, Mr Scrivener advised that the Social Care elements which indicated in the high risk rating would be looked at closely.

3. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

39. Performance Dashboard

(Item D2)

(Report by Mr M Dance, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Mr M Hill, Cabinet Member for Community Services and Mr M Austerberry, Interim Corporate Director for Growth Environment and Transport)

(Mr R Fitzgerald, Performance Manager, was present for this item)

1. The Performance Manger, Mr Fitzgerald, introduced a report that showed the progress made against targets set for Key Performance targets from data up to the end of June 2014. He highlighted the additional information that had been included in the report on pages 71 to 73 following a requested by Members to include; online contacts to the Libraries, Registration and Archives and volunteers involvement in libraries.

2. The Director of Economic Development, Ms Cooper, responded to a comment, advising that she needed to be made aware of any difficulties there were with KCC's website so that the issues could be dealt with.

3. A suggestion was made that if a performance indicator for Libraries, Registration and Archives was red the issue needed to be captured as this would be need to be addressed as part of the Libraries, Registration and Archives Service consultation on the structural options to deliver the service.

4. RESOLVED that the responses to questions by Members and the report be noted.

40. Equality Annual Report

(Item D3)

(Report by Mr M Dance, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Mr M Hill, Cabinet Member for Community Services)

(Mrs A Agyepong, Corporate Lead, Equality and Diversity, was present for this item)

1. The Corporate Lead, Equality and Diversity, Mrs Agyepong, introduced a report that sets out a position statement for services within the Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate regarding equality and diversity work and progress on KCC equality objectives for 2013/14. Mrs Agyepong highlighted examples of delivery of core services.

2. Mrs Agyepong responded to comments and questions by Members which included the following:

- A Member commented that this was an excellent report.

- A Member questioned the cost of collecting data and considered whether it was necessary. Mrs Agyepong advised that if the question was irrelevant the question should not be asked if there is no reason to collect the data.
- It was questioned why pregnancy was not considered in adaptations to services. Mrs Agyepong explained that pregnancy would only need to be relevant at the point the person came into contact with a service.
- It was suggested that it was important that people who received a bad service were confident to report it.
- A request was made that the services of Black Minority Ethnic groups' contribution in the World Wars I and II commemorations be recognised.
- A Member requested that the issues of Equality and diversity be included when commissioning services.
- It was suggested that nationally surveys did not include "Jew" as a category. Mrs Agyepong agreed look into this.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to questions by Members be noted;
- b) the current performance be noted;
- c) agreement was given by this Cabinet Committee to ensure that equality governance is observed in relation to decision making;
- d) the proposed changes to Equality Objectives be noted; and
- e) agreement was given by this Cabinet Committee to receive future reports annually in order to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty be agreed.